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# PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE SYSTEM

*Boon to Business and Industry*



—Arthur T. Moore, able reporter for the PITTSBURGH SUN-TELEGRAPH, has written a series of factual articles on the effect the ever increasing flow of traffic on the Pennsylvania Turnpike System has and is having upon the economic development of the communities which it serves.

We present, with the express permission of the PITTSBURGH SUN-TELEGRAPH, reprints of these articles which we hope will be a source of information and guidance to many additional communities along this world-famous traffic artery.

T. J. EVANS, *Chairman*  
Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission  
Harrisburg, Pa.

JAMES F. TORRANCE

JAMES J. COYNE

DAVID E. WATSON

EDWARD L. SCHMIDT, (*Ex-Officio*)

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# Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph



Aerial photo of the Blue Mountain Interchange, one of 24 interchanges along the 327-mile Pennsylvania Turnpike System.

# Turnpike Turns Bedford Into "Boom" (Not Ghost) Town

## Superhighway Brings New Life to District

BY ARTHUR T. MOORE

The completed Pennsylvania Turnpike is a boon to business and industry in Western Pennsylvania.

The effect has been similar to the wave of prosperity which followed the building of the first railroad across the state.

Millions of dollars worth of new business has poured into a wide belt along the country's most famous toll highway.

With the new business has come new vigor for old and established businesses and industries.

The opening of the Western extension in December immediately extended the zone of prosperity.

### BEDFORD 'REVOLT'

Bedford, County, for example, opposed the whole idea of a Turnpike. It feared that Bedford would become a "ghost town."

This mountain community has been a popular mecca for tourists traveling the Lincoln Highway for many years.

The town's people were up in arms. They didn't want to see the "destruction" of the tourist trade and the end of their jobs.

When the Turnpike was constructed over their objections, many residents and businessmen felt their old way of life had been destroyed. The town was two miles from the Bedford Interchange.

Many residents started to look for new fields of employment. Several hotel managers were prepared to close.

### FEAR DISSIPATED

But today, the fear that many communities by-passed by the Turnpike would become "ghost towns" with few exceptions, no longer exists.

Twelve years ago, Walter A. Jones, first chairman of the Turnpike Commission, predicted:

"The Turnpike will reduce shipping costs between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, boost real estate values and create new business and industry along its routes."

But many business leaders, including many in Bedford, scoffed at his prediction. They continued to fight the construction of the highway, claiming that millions of dollars worth

of small businesses would be wiped out.

### HISTORIC PROJECT

Jones told the Turnpike objectors:

"The highway project will rank with the building of the Erie Canal as an historic step in American transportation.

"In fact, it will bring back to Pennsylvania some of the trade it lost to New York when the Erie Canal was built."

A survey made by the Sun-Telegraph on what effect the Turnpike has had on by-passed communities, proved that Jones wasn't far off in his predictions.

Many communities, including Bedford, have become boom towns and others have been given some relief from the bumper-to-bumper traffic.

### MORE BUSINESS

Bedford today, approximately 12 years after the opening of the Turnpike, has weathered the storm and is doing more business than ever.

The hotels are doing a good winter business and are catering to an overflowing summer tourist trade.

In place of business destruction, the community has advanced with the Turnpike era.

The businessmen are so pleased with the results of the Turnpike that they are looking forward to the time when the roadway is extended into Ohio and Illinois.

### MORE TRAVELERS

Ed Flynn, owner-manager of Ft. Bedford Inn, said Bedford has now become an "objective stop" for motorists traveling the Turnpike. He claimed:

"We in the hotel and catering business have set our sights on business from visitors from Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago.

"We are now selling the community."

Flynn claimed that 75 per cent of the hotel business in



**BEDFORD SPRINGS . . .** Bland Hoke, manager of Bedford Springs Hotel, credits Turnpike business with innovations on the hotel. Here Mr. Hoke is shown in front of the resort with Nora Manahan, New York model, and his famous Great Dane, Hildegard.

Bedford now comes off the Turnpike. He added:

"The Turnpike has lengthened our season. In place of a summer resort town, we are now doing an all-year around business."

He said the two-mile trip to Bedford from the interchange has not been a factor from the tourists' standpoint. He added:

"We like to think we are right on the Turnpike. Don't tell anyone around here that we're not."

"Anyway, what's two miles to a traveler?"

Many new businesses have been attracted to Bedford since the opening of the Turnpike.

Many trucking firms have built large garages in the community and are using them as distributing points.

Flynn said many additional summer residents and week-end guests have been attracted to Bedford County since the opening of the pike. He added:

"It now is only a short drive here from Pittsburgh. Many Pittsburghers drive up here over weekends."

He said business was so good that he has purchased a motel and plans to construct another one near the Bedford interchange.

Bland Hoke, manager of Bedford Springs Hotel, said his hotel wouldn't be spending \$150,000 on remodeling and refurbishing if it weren't for the Turnpike. He added:

"That road has really done a lot for this hotel. Many persons thought it was a dead turkey before the express highway came along. They have changed their minds."

#### OPEN YEAR ROUND

He said Bedford Springs Hotel will remain open the year around. He added:

"We can do this now because of the Turnpike. It makes Bedford much easier to reach by automobile."

Hoke said he is now booking winter meetings and conventions that once would have refused to come to Bedford. He added:

"The convention people know they can get here regardless of the weather."

Hoke claimed that real estate values in the Bedford area have materially reflected the advantages of the Turnpike. He said property values have already more than doubled.

#### 'SOME ADJUSTMENT'

Business leaders in Bedford County said there was "some adjustment" of many smaller businesses on the Lincoln Highway some distance from Bedford.

However, according to banking interests, those businesses that were able to "weather the storm" of the first several years

after the Turnpike opening, are now doing a better business than ever in the past.

They attributed this to the

increased use of the Lincoln Highway by tourists and travelers who "tire of high speed travel."

Somerset is a Turn boom town. How this community has prospered will be in tomorrow's Sun-Tele



Sun-Telegraph Photo by Ed Romano.

**BEDFORD . . .** Far from being a "ghost city" as its residents feared, Bedford is booming from business

brought in by travelers on the Turnpike. This general view is of the main thoroughfare, Pitt St., looking east.



Sun-Telegraph Photo by Ed Romano.

**FORT BEDFORD INN . . .** This is the old Fort Bedford Inn, Bedford, which, like other businesses in the town,

is thriving because of traffic on the Turnpike. Town is attracting more tourists than ever before.

# Somerset a Booming Town Since Opening of the Turnpike

## Once Quiet Section Beehive of Action



HARRIS G. DECIMA . . . Chamber of Commerce official

By ARTHUR T. MOORE

Somerset is a booming town today because of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

Twelve years ago, before the opening of the Turnpike, this community of 5,000 was what businessmen referred to as a "Saturday town."

On Saturdays, most of the farmers and coal miners from neighboring communities went to "market." During the remainder of the week, the town's streets were usually quiet.

Somerset then was serviced by two secondary roads—Routes 218 and 219. A branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad came to town, mostly to haul coal out of Somerset County's mines.

### CHANGE TAKES PLACE

About the only "outsiders" who stopped in the community's

business establishments were a few Pittsburghers who had summer cottages and farms in the area.

The town's two hotels accommodated the salesmen who made the rounds of business houses in the county.

But the whole business atmosphere was changed when the

Turnpike was built and the Somerset interchange poured an unexpected stream of traffic into the community.

### BIGGEST SPENDING

Harris G. Decima, vice president and director of the Somerset Chamber of Commerce, said the town wasn't braced to take the shock of the overnight change. He added:

"None of us really had any idea what was going to happen to our quiet little community."

And to prove his point, he proudly cited last year's business record of Somerset. He reported:

"We had the largest per capita spending of any community in Pennsylvania. It was \$8,000 per family here.

"We also had the largest per person spending in Pennsylvania and were among the top ten in the nation."

### FARM COMMUNITY

When asked about the business Somerset had before the era of the Turnpike, Decima said:

"Business and the community were dormant for 20 years. It was really a community of farmers."

He gave the history of the town's huge A.&P. Food Store as a typical example of what has happened to many other businesses in Somerset. He said:

"They closed their town location several years ago and constructed a new building on Route 219, north of the main business district.

"Most businessmen thought they were making a terrible mistake. They thought the company moved itself out of business.

### TRADE TRIPLED

"Then came the Turnpike business. The Somerset interchange is almost at their front door.

"They are now doing better than \$1,000,000 worth of business a year—more than three times what they did before the opening of the Turnpike."

He said the town's four banks have approximately \$15,000,000 in deposits—almost four times more than they had 12 years ago when the Turnpike opened.

Decima said he made a business survey in Somerset in 1949

to determine the amount of business in the community. He added:

"In 1949, we had \$17,000,000 in sales.

"Although we don't have the figures, we know that sales have increased considerably since that survey was made."

### 'ON MAP NOW'

Decima credits the Turnpike almost entirely for the community's prosperity. He added:

"Many new businesses have been attracted to Somerset since the opening of the road. Before that, I don't think some of our new business houses ever heard of Somerset.

"We're on the map for sure now. Just think how many persons travel that highway and know when they are approaching the Somerset interchange."

Decima said the new businesses include the De Vilbiss Co. which constructed a large plant at the edge of town employing more than 100 persons. He added:

"This plant will continue to increase until it employs around 300 persons.

"They built their plant here because Somerset is centrally located between business in the East and Midwest. They have the advantage of being right on the Turnpike where their trucks can turn either East or West."

### NEW STATE HOSPITAL

He said a \$16,000,000 state hospital is nearing completion in Somerset. He added:

"That hospital was erected here because Somerset is now on the main highway of the state.

"It will employ more than 500 persons, including doctors, nurses and maintenance men, to keep the plant in operation."

He said other new businesses in Somerset include a shoe factory, men's wear factory, several large motels and new retail stores. He added:

"The tax evaluation of Somerset increased \$300,000 last year in new properties."

### HOUSING BOOM SEEN

He said that a housing boom will be underway in the town within the next year. He added:



Sun-Telegraph Photo by William Mahon.

LOOKING SOUTH ON N. CENTER AVE. IN PROSPERING SOMERSET



Sun-Telegraph Photo.

**MOTEL . . .** The Roof Garden Motel at the Somerset Entrance to the Turn-

pike is proof of how the Dream Highway has helped the community prosper.



Sun-Telegraph Photo.

**STATE HOSPITAL . . .** This is the \$16,000,000 state hospital being built in

Somerset. When completed, it will employ more than 500 persons.

"These new employees will need some place to live. The state hospital's housing development looks like a little city."

For the last ten years, it has been impossible to rent a store room in the business district of Somerset, according to Decima. He said several large retail firms have requested the Chamber of Commerce to find them business locations. He added:

"We can't do much for them now. Persons who have business locations are holding onto them."

#### MOTEL BUSINESS

Decima cited the experience of Eugene Zimmerman as a typical example of what is happening to business values in Somerset. He added:

"In 1939, Zimmerman opened an automobile agency at the edge of town. His location, on North Route 219, was considered almost in the country.

"When the Turnpike came into town near his garage, he constructed five tourist cabins at the rear of the garage property. He kept these cabins filled every night.

"Across the street from the garage, the School Board owned a large piece of ground which had an old school house on it.

"Zimmerman purchased the ground and the old school house for \$8,500. He moved his five cabins to the school property and sold the garage.

"He spent a lot of money improving the buildings into the Roof Garden Motel.

"Several months ago, he sold the motel for \$450,000 to Detroit business interests."

#### BIG SUMMER INFLUX

Zimmerman has constructed a new motel near the Eastern Harrisburg interchange of the Turnpike since he sold his Somerset Motel.

Robert L. Dietz, manager of the AAA club of Somerset said there has been a tremendous increase of travelers in the community. He added:

"We have many new motels and many tourist homes but not enough to handle the Summer business. You have to have reservations from a week to ten days in advance here in the Summer."

He said the automobile club business has increased since the Turnpike over the period before the Turnpike.

(Greensburg lost its traffic congestion and gained a local business because of the Turnpike. The Greensburg story on how traffic can help local business will appear tomorrow.)

# Turnpike Eases Greensburg Traffic, Brings General Increase in Business

## Visitors Now Find Parking Space So They Can Shop

By ARTHUR T. MOORE

Business increased in Greensburg when some of its bumper-to-bumper traffic started to use the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

County seat of Westmoreland County, Greensburg suffered for many years with the heavy Lincoln Highway traffic that went directly through its business district.

Huge trucks found the going through Greensburg very slow because of its hilly terrain. Trucks and automobiles were bumper-to-bumper most of the time when traveling through the community.

Business establishments in the city complained that customers were unable to park near their stores. They claimed business was being chased away because of the traffic congestion.

Traffic engineers have been studying the Greensburg situation for years with the hope of solving its traffic ills.

### PRIMARY HIGHWAYS

Greensburg has nine primary highways centering in the heart of its business district like the spokes of a huge wheel.

The Turnpike has taken some of the traffic, but not near enough, according to O. F. Deibler, executive secretary of the Greensburg Chamber of Commerce.

He added:

"We have all the traffic we can take. In fact, we still have too much."

The city is seven miles from the New Stanton interchange of the Turnpike. The connecting road is a new four-lane highway.

Deibler said this is a heavily traveled road.

He added:

"Many motorists, to miss Pittsburgh, travel Route 40 to Washington, Pa., and then hit the Turnpike at New Stanton. Many of these motorists continue on into Greensburg or their overnight stop before entering the pike."

### HOTELS STAY FILLED

When asked if business dropped off in Greensburg after the opening of the Turnpike, Deibler said:

"If there was a loss, it would have been in the hotels.

"But the Penn-Albert Hotel is full all the time. You just about have to have a reservation to get a room.

"It would almost seem nat-



Sun-Telegraph Photo by Tom Tola.

THIS IS MAIN ST., LOOKING TOWARD COURTHOUSE IN GREENSBURG

ural that gasoline stations on the Lincoln Highway would lose business, but that hasn't been so either.

"There are two new stations being erected on the Lincoln, one east of the city and the other west. These are company stations and they would not be constructed without a business survey."

### A BUSINESS BOOSTER

He said that other businesses in the city reported an increase, explaining:

"Through traffic, like on the Turnpike, doesn't do a community much good. It is better to have them out of town to make room for district customers who want to purchase."

He said the city in the past several weeks has reduced the meter over-parking fine to 25 cents. He added:

"This helps to spur business and it lets our customers know that the city isn't attempting to gouge them."

Deibler said three small textile factories have located in Greensburg since the opening of the Turnpike. He continued:

"This is a good central location for them and they have the use of the Turnpike for distributing their products."

### NEW PLANT LIKELY

He said the Chamber of Commerce is now working on an industrial deal that will bring a very large business into Greensburg. He added:

"I can't give the company's name at this time, but options have already been signed for a 100-acre tract of land.

"This project, when it materializes, will be a boon to Greensburg."

Deibler said that Greensburg's resources have practically doubled within the past 12 years, since the opening of the Turnpike.

He asserted:

"Outside of Pittsburgh, we have the largest shopping center in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

"And if we can eliminate more of our traffic and solve the parking problem, sales in our retail stores will materially increase.



Sun-Telegraph Photo.

WILLIAM CALLAHAN  
..manager of Penn-Albert..

"By getting rid of the traffic, customers in neighboring communities will feel more inclined to drive into Greensburg to do their shopping and marketing."

#### OVERALL PICTURE BETTER

When asked if all businesses in Greensburg prospered after the opening of the Turnpike, Deibler said:

"Some little fellow might have been hurt. However, the overall picture has improved so much, you have to almost discount the small group that was affected."

Greensburg's mayor, William L. Treager, who recently took office, said the Turnpike has not solved the city's traffic ills.

The mayor went on:

"The Turnpike has helped to free the city from the travelers. They don't stop much anyhow. And if they want to stop in Greensburg, it isn't far from the New Stanton interchange."

He said that Greensburg businessmen would rather depend on local people for their customers. He observed:

"That is sound business. And if you please them, they will return."

William Callahan, manager of the Penn-Albert Hotel, largest in Greensburg, said the Turnpike did not hurt the hotel business. He added:

"We depend on the traveling man not the tourist."

#### WEEK-END TRADE

However, to attract the week-end traveler, Callahan said his hotel chain, the American Hotels Corp. of America, plans to construct several signs on Route 30 and the Turnpike if possible.



Sun-Telegraph Photo.

**CO-OWNERS . . .** Vance E. Boohar Jr. (left) and his brother, Edward B. Boohar, co-owners of the Mountain View

Hotel, hold fireside discussion. The brothers say they "get a lot of business off pike." They cater to vacation trade.

The Mountain View Hotel, which is five miles east of Greensburg on the Lincoln Highway stood to lose the most business due to the Turnpike.

However, Vance Boohar Jr., owner-manager of Mountain View, said the Turnpike did not hurt business in any way. He said:

"At first we feared that our business would be destroyed. And for the first year of the

pike, we did suffer a business decline. That was only a temporary affect.

"We found that many travelers tried the Turnpike once and then returned to the Lincoln Highway."

He said that many travelers objected to the fast pace on the highway. He said his hotel is full for seven to eight months. He said:

"This is a natural trend

since we cater to the vacation trade.

"We also get a lot of business off the pike. And when it is extended across Ohio and Illinois, we will improve our winter business."

(Wilkinsburg's good fortune of less traffic and increased business will appear in tomorrow's Sun-Telegraph.)



The mile long Susquehanna River Bridge, one of the six major structures on the Pennsylvania Turnpike System

# Wilkinsburg Hails Bypass Of Western Pike Extension

## Parkway Project Will Further Aid Community

By ARTHUR T. MOORE

Wilkinsburg, pounded for many years by the heaviest traffic in the Pittsburgh district, is more than happy to be bypassed by the new Western extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

In fact, businessmen and residents alike, are looking forward to the day when heavy trucks can continue over the Turnpike to the Ohio line.

They are also looking forward to the opening of the Penn-Lincoln Parkway, which will take the bulk of through traffic out of its business district.

The businessmen of the borough feel that with less traffic, business will increase.

They think that many new customers from neighboring communities, Penn and Wilkins Townships and Monroeville, will start to use Wilkinsburg as their shopping center.

Many persons have refused to drive into Wilkinsburg because of the traffic and the almost impossible task of finding parking space.

### STUDY PARKING PLAN

To encourage new customers, the community has started to solve its parking problems.

It has formed the Wilkinsburg Parking Authority and hired Donald McNeil, who resigned recently as Pittsburgh's traffic engineer, to make an extensive study of the borough's parking situation.

Clarence C. Coleman, president of the Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce and head of the Coleman Motor Co., said he believes Wilkinsburg will become a great shopping center.

He added:

"We have taken a terrible beating from traffic for many years. The very heavily traveled Lincoln Highway and William Penn merged in Wilkinsburg and went through the community on Penn Ave.

"We have had so much traffic, including all the large trailer trucks going both East and West, that many persons refused to stop in local business houses."

He said the truck problem was almost licked when the Turnpike extension opened.



**PLANNING THE FUTURE . . .** Burgess T. W. Stephens, of Wilkinsburg (left) and Jack Williamson, manager of the Penn-Lincoln Hotel, look over plans for solving parking and traffic problems in the borough. Townspeople feel as though they now can make real progress since heavy traffic has been converted to the turnpike.

However, he explained:

"This only lasted a short time. Both Ohio and Pennsylvania clamped weight limits on feeder roads at the Ohio line. We now have the trucks with us again."

### LARGE TRUCKS PROBLEM

Coleman said that businessmen in Wilkinsburg hope that the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and Ohio will be able to get together by spring to permit the large trucks to use the Turnpike.

He said there are 534 business houses in Wilkinsburg and that

only a fraction of them depend on traffic for customers.

He added:

"There is no doubt that the advantage of less traffic far exceeds the business loss. Most concerns will continue to prosper when we are completely by-passed."

He said the new Turnpike extension and the Penn-Lincoln Parkway has already attracted residential construction in the Wilkinsburg area. He said:

"The A. T. & T. Trucking Co. will soon start to build a huge garage in Monroeville.

This project will bring about 500 families into the area—all potential customers for Wilkinsburg businessmen."

### LOOK FOR HOUSING

He said many new families are building or looking for houses in the Wilkinsburg area because of the Parkway. He explained:

"When that is open, it will only take a few minutes to travel into the heart of the Golden Triangle."

However, Coleman said the business people of Wilkinsburg are not going to sit back with the hope that streams of new customers will be flocking in. He continued:

"The Chamber of Commerce is planning an extensive advertising program.

"If we continue to advertise, we will attract new business. If you want to sell, you have to advertise."

He said many business leaders at first thought Wilkinsburg would suffer when the bumper-to-bumper traffic came to an end.

He observed:

"They know better now. Even the skeptics are planning new and better things for their future."

### GAS SALES HOLD UP

Coleman said he believed some of the gasoline stations, hotels and restaurants in Wilkinsburg would suffer from the community being by-passed.

However, a check of several gasoline stations in the Wilkinsburg area, did not uphold Coleman's fears.

Paul Turner, owner of the gas station at 400 Penn Ave., the Lincoln Highway, said he has not noticed any difference in his business since the newly completed Western section of the Turnpike opened. He said:

"I don't know the answer on why business didn't drop off, but it hasn't.

"I think that more local traffic will use Penn Ave. when all the heavy trucks are permitted to use the pike.

"This will lessen Penn Ave. traffic and customers won't mind turning into a gasoline station. I'm looking forward to selling more gas to our local residents. If you serve them right, they will return."

### BUSINESS ON INCREASE

When asked what he thought of traffic leaving Wilkinsburg, Burgess T. W. Stephens said:

"We love it. After 20 years, Penn Ave. will be returned to Wilkinsburg and our people."

Stephens, who operates a florist shop at Rebecca and Wood Sts., said the business outlook is the best in the borough's history. He remarked:

"When we get our parking

authority into operation, business will be humming."

He said that Wilksburg will become a community shopping area. He said:

"With all that traffic, many of our own residents refused to get into traffic jams to make purchases. That situation won't exist in the near future."

Even Jack Williamson, manager of the Penn-Lincoln Hotel, 800 Penn Ave., said his business would improve without the heavy traffic.

He added:

"Without those big trucks, our regular guests will be able to sleep. We get our business from the traveling man, not so many tourists."

He said with less traffic and more parking space the hotel's restaurant would also be improved considerably.

(The Irwin and Lincoln Highway problem of reduced traffic and declining business will be discussed in tomorrow's Sun-Telegraph.)



**MAIN STREET . . .** This is Wilksburg's main street, Penn Ave., looking west. The once-clogged thoroughfare

Sun-Telegraph Photo by Ed Romano.

now is comparatively free of business-choking traffic. Once again, townspeople can find room to park.



Sun-Telegraph Photo by Ed Romano.

**ADVERTISING IRWIN . . .** L. B. Gebert (left), vice chairman of the Highway Division, Irwin Chamber of

Commerce, and Charles Sprankle, president, stand in front of sign visible from turnpike coming into Irwin.

# New Pike Link Affects Irwin



**INTERCHANGE . . .** Looking west on Route 30, the Lincoln Highway at the Irwin interchange of the turnpike.

The booming business in Irwin and the Lincoln Highway was destroyed when the Pennsylvania Turnpike was extended to the Ohio line, the Irwin Chamber of Commerce reported.

It described the Lincoln Highway, between Wilkinsburg and Irwin, as a "ghost road" compared to the past 2 years.

When the Turnpike opened 12 years ago, the Irwin interchange was the end of the highway. All traffic going west had to use the Lincoln Highway.

And until the western extension of the Turnpike was opened last year, business on the Lincoln was booming 24 hours a day.

Businessmen, not knowing that the Turnpike would be extended, rushed to purchase choice business locations 12 years ago, paying inflated costs on the property.

Gas stations, restaurants and hotels sprang up along the highway almost overnight — all geared to handle the full traffic load of the Turnpike.

However, since the extension opened to the Ohio line, Irwin just became another interchange of the toll highway.

## BOTTOM KNOCK

Charles F. Sprankle, president of the Irwin Chamber of Commerce, said the Turnpike was really a boon to business in both Irwin and the Lincoln. He added:

"Irwin got business from the hotels and motels along the Lincoln.

"And all business establishments along the Lincoln Highway prospered because of the heavy influx of trucks, tourists and businessmen."

Sprankle said the bottom was knocked out of the booming business

when the extension opened. He added:

"Most of the trouble can be blamed on the Turnpike Commission. They wanted travelers to continue on to Monroeville (Pittsburgh Interchange) so they would get 15 cents more toll."

## CLOSER TO IRWIN

He said the Commission erected a sign near Irwin Interchange telling motorists that the Pittsburgh interchange at Monroeville was 12 miles. He added:

"This sign made it look like the Pittsburgh interchange is right in Pittsburgh. When in fact, Pittsburgh is more than four miles nearer from Irwin than it is from the Pittsburgh interchange."

The Irwin Chamber of Commerce erected a huge sign near the Turnpike's sign, telling motorists that the shortest route to Pittsburgh is via the Lincoln Highway at Irwin.

Sprankle estimated that the value of business property from the Westinghouse Bridge to the Irwin interchange at between \$20,000,000 and \$25,000,000.

## BUILDING CONTINUES

He added:

"Although there isn't as much traffic on the Lincoln as in the past, the value of the properties have not been affected."

He reported that since the extension was announced by the Commission, building of business properties continued at a fast pace. He said the new properties included a Howard Johnson Restaurant, two Atlantic Gas stations, a Standard Oil station, Sunoco station and other business properties.

The businessmen along Route 30 joined the Irwin Chamber of Commerce and started to look for new customers. Installation of a sign was started in Wilksburg to tell motorists to use Route 30, the shortest route to the Turnpike.

Wilksburg police stopped the sign painting before it was completed because it was "being painted on Sunday."

## NATURAL COURSE

When asked what he thought the future outlook for businessmen on Route 30 was, Sprankle said:

"I think the traffic will eventually take its natural course and the Lincoln Highway will get its share. We can't expect as much traffic as in the past 12 years, but we believe there will be enough to make all the

investments along the Lincoln pay off."

Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Conley, owner of the Conley Motel, near the Irwin interchange, said their business investment was in the neighborhood of \$100,000. Mrs. Conley added:

"Before the extension, we had to turn customers away every night—Winter and Summer. Now we are only doing about 50 per cent of the business we did in the past years.

"The extension of the Turnpike definitely hurt our business, the same as it did other business people along Route 30."

## PARKWAY TO HELP

She felt that business would again approach near normal this Summer. She added:

"We will only be a few minutes from Pittsburgh when they open the Penn - Lincoln Parkway. We can then cater to businessmen. We know there is a need for first class motel service and we can give them that service."

George Jae, who operates Jae's Service Station, one mile east of East McKeesport, said his gasoline business increased when the heavy traffic was eliminated on the Lincoln. He added:

"The motorist now has a chance to pull off and get back onto the highway. There was just too much traffic before the extension of the Turnpike was opened."

## RESTAURANT PROSPERS

C. L. Taylor, who owns the large Taylor Dining Room near East McKeesport, said the extension of the Turnpike didn't show too much difference in his business. He added:

Paul Beondy, owner of the Blue Moon Tourist Courts on the Lincoln Highway in North Versailles Township, said he hasn't been able to judge what the extension of the Turnpike will do to his business. He added:

"I'll have to see what happens this Summer before I can say anything about it. However, I don't think we need to worry."

Sprankle claimed that business will continue to be good on the Lincoln, but will lack the "overflowing" of the past 12 years. However, he added:

"We are going after the business now. Before, it just came to us naturally."

(The new business prosperity in Monroeville since the Turnpike was extended west of Irwin will be described in the Sun-Telegraph tomorrow.)

# Pike Link Aid To Monroeville



**MODERN . . .** This is Tourinns motel, on Route 22, one of the largest and most modern in the district. It reportedly represents better than \$400,000 investment.



**WILLIAM PENN MOTEL, ROUTE 22 NEAR MONROEVILLE INTERCHANGE**

By **ARTHUR H. MOORE**

The new borough of Monroeville has "growing pains" today because of the western extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

New construction, both business and private homes, is going up so fast that Burgess Samuel Jenkins said it is almost impossible to keep up with it.

He added:

"The Turnpike has really been a boon to this borough."

He said the tax value of property in the borough has reached \$8,500,000 and is increasing by at least \$600,000 a year he said:

"The tax value of property on the William Penn Highway, from the Turnpike interchange to the borough line, is now topping more than \$2,000,000."

"And from the looks of new and contemplated construction, our business district hasn't even got a good start."

## OLD MINING SITE

Twelve years ago, when the Turnpike opened as far west as Irwin, Monroeville, then Patton Township, was classified as a "country" community.

The William Penn Highway property in the "heart" of the borough was nothing but huge piles of dirt, left there more than 25 years ago by a coal stripping operation.

Highway property was cheap and could be purchased for a couple of thousand dollars an acre.

Several businessmen had "taken a chance" and constructed business establishments along the William Penn. However, these were small and catered more to the local residents.

Traffic on the William Penn had been "light" for many years because of the state's construction program east of Monroeville. The detours were bad and most of the travelers used the Lincoln Highway.

When the Turnpike Commission started to construct the toll

highway across Monroeville to the Ohio line, property values jumped "like mad."

Overnight, property that was selling for \$25 a front foot jumped to more than \$100 a foot. Some of the land changed hands several times, with each owner making large profits.

The Turnpike Commission named the Monroeville interchange "Pittsburgh." This brought a storm of protests from both the residents and businessmen. They wanted the interchange to be called "Monroeville."

But today, the businessmen are fighting with the Irwin Chamber of Commerce and anyone else who has any ideas on changing the name.

The name "Pittsburgh" has made thousands of dollars in profits for business establishments along the William Penn Highway. And all the businessmen will now admit it.

## ARGUE OVER SIGNS

Travelers on the Turnpike, who want to stop in the City of Pittsburgh, turn off at the Pittsburgh interchange, thinking it is the nearest route to the Golden Triangle.

The Irwin Chamber of Commerce and Lincoln Highway businessmen claim the Turnpike Commission has been unfair and is misleading the traveler. They have constructed signs, telling motorists that the Irwin interchange is the shortest route to Pittsburgh.

The Irwin Chamber announced:

"We're attempting to capture some of the business we have lost to the William Penn group."

One of the largest motels in the Pittsburgh district, Tourinns, was recently opened on the William Penn Highway, approximately one mile west of the Pittsburgh interchange.

This motel has been reported as a "better than \$400,000 investment." It has 42 motel rooms and seven businessmen's rooms; a large dining room, lounge and a service station. It covers approximately 12 acres.

When asked about business on the William Penn, Manager Clyde Pipher said:

"We are doing well for this time of the year."

When asked what he thought of the struggle of signs by the Route 30 group, Pipher said:

"Cut-throat business isn't any good. We'll all do our

Sun-Telegraph Photos by David Evans.

share of business when Summer comes."

It takes 15 employes to operate Tourinns. The service even includes a laundry room for the exclusive use of guests.

#### REPORT ON BUSINESS

L. W. Carpenter opened the William Penn Motel, near the Pittsburgh interchange, in April. It is a 15 unit motel of ultra modern design.

Carpenter said he has approximately a \$200,000 business. And before construction started on the motel, he had to level 30,000 yards of dirt.

When asked about business, Carpenter said that last Summer,

when the Pittsburgh interchange was as far west as travelers could go on the Turnpike, it was booming.

He added:

"We had less business when the Turnpike opened to the Ohio line. However, those signs erected by the Irwin Chamber of Commerce to direct traffic over Route 30 has substantially hurt all businessmen on the William Penn."

L. R. Conley, who operates an 18 unit motel near the Irwin interchange, is now building a 35 unit ultra modern motel on the William Penn Highway, approximately three miles east of Wilkinsburg. It also includes a mod-

ern restaurant which opened last year.

Conley said he plans to cater to businessmen in his new motel. He claimed that many men would rather stop at a modern motel at the edge of Pittsburgh rather than take a chance of getting a room in the city.

#### GAS BUSINESS 'FAIR'

R. Carl Buckley, manager of a Gulf service station in the center of Monroeville, near the Pittsburgh interchange, said business has been "fair" along the William Penn since the Turnpike opened in Ohio. He said:

"The signs erected by the Route 30 group on the Turnpike and in Wilksburg have

hurt us. The Route 30 bunch were up in arms about losing their business."

Buckley claimed that business will boom this Summer because many travelers will use the William Penn, both east and west, rather than travel the high speed Turnpike. He explained:

"We're almost a new business community here. But there is no doubt that we will do our share."

(Why Ligonier, which attempted to block the construction of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, changed its opinion of the Turnpike will be described in the Sun-Telegraph tomorrow.)

# Ligonier Finally 'Approves' Turnpike

## Once Held Threat To Town's Future, Merchants Admit

By **ARTHUR T. MOORE**  
Sun-Telegraph Staff Writer

Ligonier—one of the most famous resort areas in Pennsylvania—attempted to block the construction of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

Its businessmen and residents felt the Turnpike would ruin the small mountain community that depends on tourists and summer guests for most of its livelihood.

But today, more than 12 years after the opening of the Turnpike, most of the businessmen will admit they miscalculated the effect of the toll road on the community.

One leading businessman, who admitted that he made three trips to Harrisburg to block the construction of the toll road, aimed:

"We have not been hurt by the Turnpike. We know that now. In fact, I believe it has materially helped Ligonier."

Years ago Ligonier had a similar experience when its district coal mines closed. Most of the townspeople thought the community would become a "ghost town."

#### A THRIVING RESORT

This also proved a false calculation, and Ligonier grew into one of the most thriving resort areas in the country.

Its 2,800 winter population swells to more than 12,000 during the summer months.

Clarence C. Ruff, president of the Ligonier Chamber of Commerce, said the Turnpike really hurt the community for the first several years. However, he added:

"Even today some of our gasoline stations, hotels and restaurants don't have the winter business because of the Turnpike.

"However, our summer business is on the increase and the Turnpike has helped it. Tourists and summer guests find it easier to reach Ligonier by traveling the Turnpike.

"And with the western extension, and the possible extension to Ohio and Illinois, we will reap materially in increased business."

#### EASIER FOR PARKING

Ruff said that other business houses in Ligonier, outside of those that cater to travelers have not been hurt by the Turnpike. He observed:

"In fact, I think many of them have shown a marked improvement. It is much easier to find a parking spot here now and we're not being pounded by as many heavy trucks."

He said that when the four-lane highway between Greensburg and Ligonier is completed, business in the community would show a marked improvement, explaining:

"It will be more pleasant to drive than the Turnpike. Many tourists will travel the Lincoln Highway again because of its scenic beauty."

Although several service stations claimed the toll road hurt

business, three new stations have been constructed in the borough within the past several years.

#### PRAISE FOR TURNPIKE

Burgess A. J. McColly said that the present road through Ligonier could not handle today's traffic if it were not for the Turnpike.

He said the heavy trucks would find it hard going around the town's famous square. And residents would fight any efforts to have the square eliminated.

The square is like the old village green, criss-crossed by walkways, a shelter and a few benches in the middle, surrounded by streets which front stores that represent the greater part of the business houses.

McColly said that many tourists are traveling the Lincoln Highway again because of its beauty.

He said:

"We're all very tickled that most of the heavy trucks are gone. It makes the Lincoln a fine road to travel—east and west of Ligonier."

"Our biggest assets here are the tourists and summer residents. If we do a good job pleasing them, business in Ligonier will continue to grow."

#### BOOM IN BUILDING

Burgess McColly said new construction, both businesses and homes, has increased in the

past several years. He explained:

**"That shows the ghost town idea is out."**

He reported that the tax valuation is \$1,300,000, representing a gain of approximately \$250,000 in the past ten years.

Bank deposits, now totaling approximately \$5,500,000, have

been increasing considerably every year.

Charles Roman, owner-manager of the Ft. Ligonier Hotel, who purchased the property in September, said he is sure that a lot of traffic has been diverted from Ligonier by the Turnpike.

He said:

**"The drop appears to be in winter trade, according to a survey of our books. In the summer, business holds up very well."**

Compared to summer business, Roman said the winter use of his hotel is approximately 75 per cent off.

## 12 MILES FROM PIKE

Roman said the hotels in Ligonier get some winter and a lot of summer business from the Turnpike. The community is 12 miles away from the Donegal interchange.

He said many travelers know about the Ligonier Valley resort area and make it a point



**HOTEL . . .** The se-  
date, old Fort Ligo-  
nier Hotel long has  
been a haven for dis-  
trict residents. In this  
picture, the hotel it-  
self is hidden at right.  
Sign at left points  
way to it from Ligo-  
nier's Main St.



**HAVEN . . .** This is  
Hotel Breniser, locat-  
ed on Ligonier's Main  
St., near the famous  
town square. It has  
been a popular inn for  
devotees of the moun-  
tain air.

to stop overnight in the community.

Walter Saling, the news dealer in Ligonier, said his summer trade has materially increased since the Turnpike was constructed.

He claimed that most of his yearly sales of out-of-town newspapers, 500,000 copies, are

sold in the summer months.

Burgess McColly claimed the rich and the poor alike swarm to Ligonier in the summer.

He added:

"The Turnpike is helping to get these people here."

He said that Ligonier Valley, often associated with Rolling

Rock, Mellon, Scaife, Thompson and polo, is not exclusively a rich man's resort.

He added:

"You can find hundreds of cabins and cottages along our streams and mountains. Every year there are more being constructed.

"We're a long way from

being dead, even with the Turnpike."

(Pittsburgh is more than ten miles away from the nearest Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange. How the Turnpike benefits the city will be described in tomorrow's Sun-Telegraph.)



**THE SQUARE . . .** This is the famous town square in the heart of the Ligonier business district. The bandstand in center of square long has been a subject for

district artists. The tiny mountain village, long known as a Pennsylvania resort town, is getting more business than ever now that the turnpike is in operation.

Sun-Telegraph Photos by David Evans.

# Turnpike Makes City Motor Gateway for Nation

## Connects East With Midwest

By ARTHUR T. MOORE  
Sun-Telegraph Staff Writer

Pittsburgh is the motor Gateway to both East and West because of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

The Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, City of Pittsburgh, Teamsters Joint Council and the Automobile Club of Pittsburgh have praised the toll highway, claiming it has helped materially the city.

However, the Pittsburgh Hotels Association has claimed the Turnpike has reduced its tourists business, particularly during the summer when the hotels need the business.

B. F. Jones III, president of the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce and vice president of Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., reported the Turnpike has proved beneficial to both business and motorists. He added:

"The Pennsylvania Turnpike has afforded Pittsburgh industries the facility that has enabled them to move their products to the Eastern cities and to receive other products from these cities with greater speed.

### TO OPEN MIDWEST

"It is logical, therefore, to state that the same expeditious service will be available to and from the Midwest now that the Western Extension of the Parkway has been completed."

Jones said the toll highway has made it possible for more motorists to visit Pittsburgh. He added:

"In turn, it affords Pittsburghers an inexpensive method of travel to various historical spots in Pennsylvania.

"There can be no doubt that as the citizens of Pittsburgh and other communities take advantage of the facilities offered by the Turnpike, it will have an increasing beneficial effect on Pittsburgh."

### MOTOR HUB OF U. S.

Deputy Mayor Howard B. Stewart claimed that Pittsburgh has now become the hub for the nation's motor traffic. He added:

"This position is of great advantage to Pittsburghers.



Sun-Telegraph Photo by Ed Romano

**Donald J. Howard B. F. Jones 3rd Stanley L. Vale**

... studying Turnpike in relation to industries ...

It provides the city with a rapid overland vehicular route to metropolitan areas in the Atlantic seaboard.

"And when it is completed west, Pittsburgh will be midway between America's first and second cities—New York and Chicago.

"This advantage alone should help us to attract new industries and new business to Pittsburgh."

### RELIEVES CONGESTION

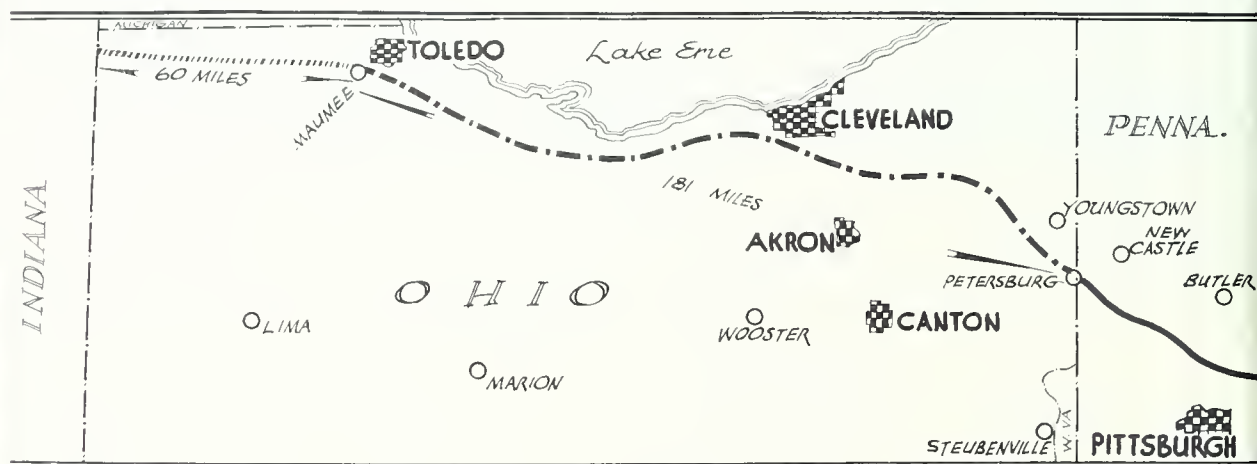
Stewart said the highway will make Pittsburgh a center for motorists throughout the country. He added:

"Since plans for the Turnpike were first laid during the administration of Governor George H. Earle, Pittsburgh has been enthusiastic about the benefits the highway would bring to this community."

He said the lack of connecting highways at the western terminus at the Ohio line has limited its use by large trucks. He added:

"Even so, some of the large trucks and many of the through passenger vehicles have been using this new facility, bypassing Pittsburgh and relieving congestion on city streets to some extent.

"The full effect of the Turnpike cannot be adequately measured until weight restrictions on connecting highways are either lifted by Ohio and Pennsylvania or new links are constructed."



Sun-Telegraph Map.

**PRESENT AND FUTURE . . .** The solid line shows the route of the present Pennsylvania Turnpike to Petersburg, O. The new road from there to the Indiana state line will be 214 miles long. It will be built in two parts with

the first section (dot-and-dash line) 181 miles long. The remainder of the super-highway (dotted line) will extend to the Indiana border. The cost of the Ohio toll road is estimated at \$283,000,000.

### HOTELS TO SUFFER

He said that after the Western Extension was opened, a large number of large trucks had rerouted via the Turnpike. He claimed these trucks are back on city streets because of the weight restrictions on connecting roads at the Ohio line.

Charles Wilson, manager of Hotel William Penn speaking for the hotelmen, said he doubts that the original Turnpike, which ended at Irwin, had any effect on hotel business here. He added:

"However, the extension will keep the tourist trade out of the city. They won't come into Pittsburgh to find a room and pass up motels such as Tourinns on Route 22."

### NEED BUSINESS

He said the hotels could use more summer and week-end business. He added:

"We need the business when the tourist trade is at its peak. I think the hotel business will be hurt this summer because of the toll road."

When asked if it would make it easier for businessmen and convention people to come into Pittsburgh, Wilson said:

"Probably it will make it much easier. However, the businessman and salesman will get into Pittsburgh even if he has to come by foot or horseback."

"The convention people will come here regardless of the highway."

### EASIER FOR TRUCKS

Scott E. Marshall, president of Teamsters Joint Council 40, said the Turnpike has helped both members of the Teamsters Union and their employers. He added:

"It makes it much easier to drive one of those huge trucks to Eastern destinations. The Lincoln Highway is a tough grind in the mountains. And in rough weather it is very dangerous."

Marshall said the trucks are able to make better time, use less gasoline and last longer

when they use the Turnpike. He added:

"Just think: you can now get one-day truck service between Pittsburgh and New York. That could never happen without the Turnpike."

### HELPED MAKE JOBS

He said the Teamsters union here is larger than ever before. He estimated the membership at approximately 20,000. He added:

"We feel the Turnpike has helped to give jobs to more men. More trucks are moving east and west out of Pittsburgh because of the toll road."

E. C. Timmerman, head of the Automobile Club of Pittsburgh, said the Turnpike has given the Pittsburgh district motorist an opportunity to discover the state's natural beauty, its mountains and historic sites and shrines. He added:

"This has been made possible by the great saving in time in traveling the Turn-

pike, which was designed primarily for the safety and comfort of the motorist."

"The Turnpike also permits greater assessability for shoppers coming into the Pittsburgh area. It gives them a quick way with a minimum amount of delay."

### NEW JERSEY LINK

In the near future, the Turnpike will link up with a super-highway system throughout the East that will give the motorist his dream of high-speed travel with few intersections or traffic lights.

The recent opening of New Jersey's \$255,000,000 turnpike is a link in this chain.

When the entire network is completed, motorists will be able to roar "down East" to Maine over expressways now being planned.

Ultimately the Ohio and Indiana Turnpike will link up with the Pennsylvania Turnpike, opening the West to fast travel.



The Tuscarora Mountain Tunnel (5326 feet long), one of seven tunnels through the Allegheny Mountains on the Pennsylvania Turnpike System.





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620



